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ABSTRACT

This report discusses the growing intercollegiate athletic reform movement by first highlighting the 1992-93 National Collegiate Athletic Association's (NCAA) approved reform actions and then discussing the challenges and actions needed for the future. The report indicates that initial progress has been made towards reforming intercollegiate athletics in the areas of academic integrity, financial integrity, and independent certification since the NCAA's approved actions were announced at its 1992 convention, but warns that challenges lie ahead. Remaining issues are expected to be less in the areas of student educational requirements and standards and have more to do with athletics governance, presidential control, financial integrity, and public accountability through certification. It is stressed that presidential support and commitment to enhancing intercollegiate sports embodying the standards and values befitting higher education are crucial elements for the future. Detours from athletic reform that are considered damaging and are cautioned against are in the areas of favoritism (special considerations warranted for favorite sons), and being subjected to federal legislative rule to enforce reform. In this regard, oversight of the rules must be maintained, which entails changing them as participants agree, and enforcing compliance in the event of violation; to do otherwise will threaten the survival of nationwide intercollegiate competition. (GLR)

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A SOLID START

A Report On Reform Of Intercollegiate Athletics

REPORT OF THE

KNIGHT FOUNDATION

Commission On Intercollegiate Athletics

MARCH 1991

HE026390

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Letter Of Transmittal

March 17, 1992

Mr. Lee Hills
Chairman
Board of Trustees
Knight Foundation
2 South Biscayne Boulevard
Miami, FL 33131

Dear Mr. Hills,

In March 1991, the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics submitted to you its report, Keeping Faith with the Student-Athlete: A New Model for Intercollegiate Athletics.

That document, the product of more than a year of study, debate and discussion, placed less emphasis on specific solutions for the problems in college sports and more on proposing a structure for reform. We suggested what we called the "one-plus-three" model, a road map to help guide academic officials as they grapple with the difficult and complex problems of big-time intercollegiate athletics.

When we released our report, the members of the Commission pledged to follow through. We joined forces with other leaders of the athletics reform movement—the Presidents Commission of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), professional associations, college and university presidents, and governing boards—to advance reform. This alliance has already begun to build on the new model. In this regard, the leadership of the Presidents Commission has been outstanding. In fact, substantial progress has already been made on ten of the twenty specific recommendations put forth by the Knight Commission one year ago.

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Letter Of Transmittal

Today, one year later, we believe the reform movement is off to a fine start. But a long road lies ahead of us. Because much of that road — particularly in the areas of presidential control, financial integrity and certification — is still under construction, the rest of the journey will undoubtedly be more difficult and time consuming. Nevertheless, we are enormously encouraged by the progress to date.

We are grateful that the Foundation's trustees have extended the life of the Commission into 1993. With your continued support and guidance, we plan to persevere.

Respectfully,

William C. Friday
Co-Chairman
President
William R. Kenan, Jr. Fund

Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C.
Co-Chairman
President Emeritus
University of Notre Dame

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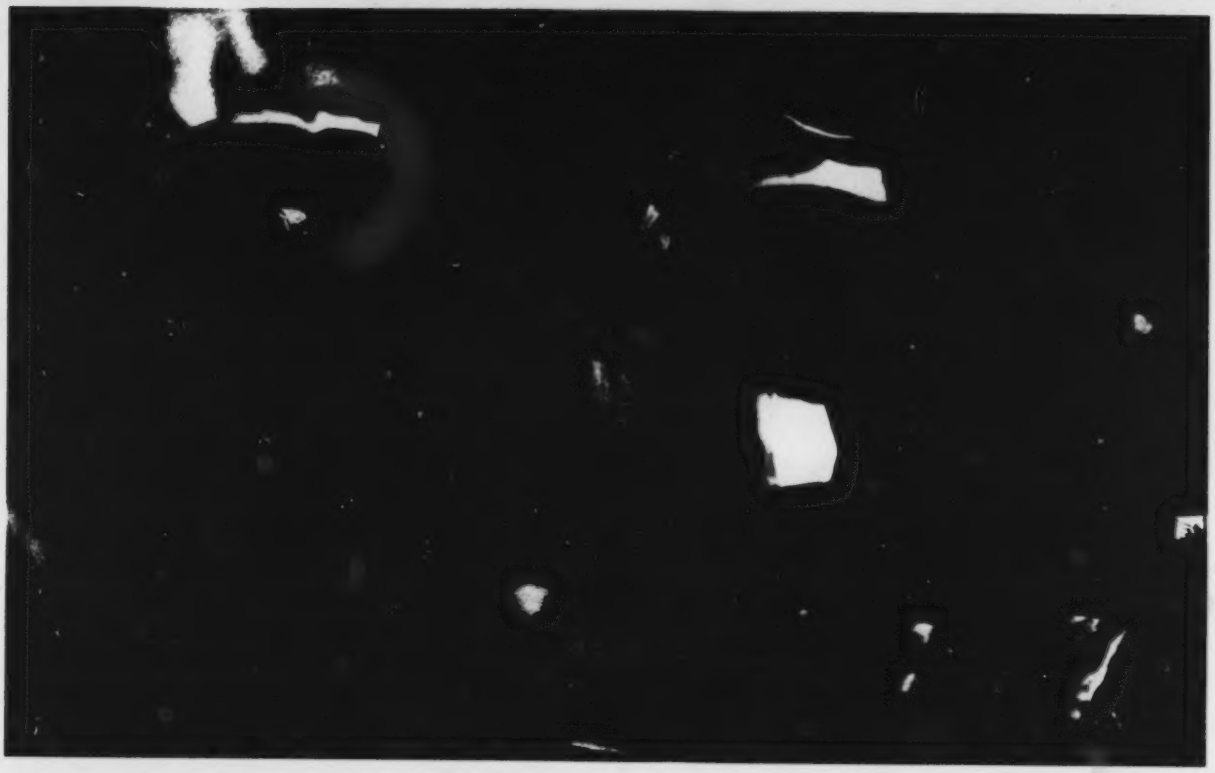

A Solid Start

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The public clearly senses that reform is underway. In its report last year, the Knight Commission referred to a Louis Harris poll conducted in 1989 indicating that 78 percent of Americans believed big-time intercollegiate athletics were out of control. A recent follow-up survey indicates that 47 percent of the public now hold that view, a dramatic 31 point decline.

A Solid Start

Twelve months ago the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics concluded that big-time college athletics appeared to have lost their bearings and to be veering out of control. In support of a burgeoning sports reform movement, the Commission proposed a new model for intercollegiate athletics, a road map entitled "one-plus-three," in which the "one" — presidential control — would be directed toward the "three" — academic integrity, financial integrity and independent certification. We believed that all of the subordinate problems and issues of college sports could be addressed responsibly within this model.

The Commission's statement, *Keeping Faith with the Student-Athlete*, was not delivered in a vacuum, but in the midst of a growing debate in academic and athletics circles about college sports, their purposes, and how to reform them. We decided to make common cause with the leaders of this reform movement, including the Presidents Commission of the NCAA, college and university presidents, and governing boards. That alliance has already produced results.

As Washington Post columnist Thomas Boswell wrote in June 1991, after reviewing the Presidents Commission's new proposals to raise academic standards, "Just 100 days ago, it seemed like dreamy stuff for the Knight Commission to intone, 'Cutting academic corners in order to admit athletes will not be tolerated.' Now it doesn't seem quite so farfetched." Today it is not at all farfetched. When the January 1992 NCAA convention enacted the presidents' proposals, significantly higher academic standards became binding on every big-time college and university athletics program.

The presidents' proposals were approved by handsome margins. The 3-1 votes by which academic standards were raised reinforced the impression that presidents had taken charge. Other important reform measures were also approved, and action on still more was scheduled in a new strategic plan developed by the Presidents Commission.

Meanwhile, acting independently of the NCAA, many governing boards and higher education associations have given impetus to reform with their public endorsements of the Knight Commission recommendations. And with more than 25,000 copies already distributed, it is clear that the report and its statement of principles have become — as we hoped — "a serious vehicle for discussion" on individual campuses.

Perhaps the most encouraging news is the following: The public clearly senses that reform is underway. In its report last year, the Knight Commission referred to a

Louis Harris poll conducted in 1989 indicating that 78 percent of Americans believed big-time intercollegiate athletics were out of control. A recent follow-up survey indicates that 47 percent of the public now hold that view, a dramatic 31 point decline. Completed in February 1992, the new Harris survey attributes this impressive change to the accelerated pace of reform in recent years.

As for the NCAA itself, its 1992 convention proved to be one of the most significant in memory. Here is how that convention's actions promise to reshape intercollegiate athletics.

1. Effective this year:

   ❑ **Satisfactory Progress in Degree Requirements.** "Majoring in eligibility" is a thing of the past. Division I student-athletes must have completed 25 percent, 50 percent and 75 percent of the program course requirements for their specific degree in order to compete in their third, fourth and fifth years of enrollment, respectively.

   ❑ **Satisfactory Progress in Grade Point Average.** Student-athletes cannot compete with little chance of graduating. Entering their third and fourth years of enrollment, Division I student-athletes must have a GPA of 90 and 95 percent, respectively, of the minimum cumulative GPA required to graduate.

   ❑ **Satisfactory Progress in School Year.** Student-athletes can no longer slide by during the academic year. Division I and II student-athletes will have to take three-quarters of their courses during the regular academic year, instead of relying on summer school to make up credits.

   ❑ **Coaches' Income.** It is clear who employs the coaches. All coaches in Divisions I and II are now required to obtain prior, annual, written approval from university presidents for all athletically related income, the use of the institution's name, and outside compensation from shoe and apparel companies.

   ❑ **Official Visits.** High school athletes will understand that reform is real. Prospects cannot accept official visits to Division I schools prior to the "early signing period" unless they present minimum SAT results of 700 (ACT results of 17) and a GPA of 2.0 in seven core courses.

"VERY IMPRESSIVE... NOW LET'S SEE HIM READ IT."

HENRY PAYNE reprinted by permission of UFS, Inc.

- **Transfer Students.** Mid-year transfer students (including junior college transfers) at all Division I and II institutions must meet satisfactory progress requirements the following fall, not one year later.

2. Effective by 1993:

- **Presidential Control.** University presidents and the NCAA Council will have in hand a major examination of the role of presidents at the institutional, conference and national levels.

- **Certification.** The proposals of the NCAA Subcommittee on Certification, which encompass the "one-plus-three" model, will be considered at the 1993 convention.

- **Gender Equity.** A study of gender equity in intercollegiate athletics will be completed, including consideration of equity in grants-in-aid for women's sports.

- **Cost Containment.** Grants-in-aid for Division II programs will be reduced by 10 percent, matching cost reductions enacted in 1991 for Division I.

3. Effective by 1994.

   ❑ **Financial Integrity.** University presidents and the NCAA Council will have access to a comprehensive examination of financial issues (including sources of financial assistance for student-athletes; the influence of athletics foundations, booster clubs and media revenues; and gender equity).

4. Effective by 1995:

   ❑ **Initial Eligibility.** New initial-eligibility rules will insure that prospective student-athletes have a reasonable chance of completing college. By August 1995, prospects will be required to present a 2.5 grade point average (out of a possible 4.0) in 13 core high school units, along with a combined SAT score of 700 (ACT score of 17) in order to compete in their first year of enrollment.

The Commission concludes that a solid start on the road to athletics reform has been made. Presidents are in control of the process. Academic reforms — "no pass, no play" — have been enacted and will be put into place over the next several years. A major study of financial issues is planned, with legislation scheduled for 1994. A certification program is being tested and will top the NCAA's 1993 legislative agenda.

THE REST OF THE ROAD

Encouraging as these developments are, a long and hazardous road lies before us. One indication of the difficulties ahead can be found in the February Harris poll. Although the public appears convinced that a substantial reform effort is underway, it has adopted a wait-and-see attitude on whether presidents can complete the job. Large majorities (70 percent or more) continue to express concern about rules violations and their impact on university integrity, the false promise of professional careers for student-athletes, financial greed in college sports, and the seemingly insatiable appetite for television revenues. Nearly half (43 percent) still doubt that higher education can put its athletics house in order.

Remaining issues have less to do with the bread-and-butter of higher education (assessing what students know and are able to do, and setting standards of performance) than with complex and difficult problems of athletics governance, presidential control, financial integrity, and public accountability through certification. Because these issues are less clear cut, involving large stakes for individuals and

institutions, they are also of necessity more political. The task for academic and athletics administrators is to keep their eyes on the main prize: a structure for intercollegiate sports embodying the standards and values befitting higher education.

John Biever

In this regard, several actions taken in the past year are promising. First, in developing a strategic plan to take up enduring issues in intercollegiate athletics, the Presidents Commission has demonstrated its long-term commitment to reform. The results of both the 1991 and 1992 conventions speak for themselves as evidence of the power of that commitment. When presidents are informed and involved, good things happen.

Second, in the next two years the NCAA intends to concentrate on major structural considerations in athletics: certification; presidential authority at the institutional, conference and national levels; and financial control and integrity. These intentions stake out the road ahead, and they round out the "one-plus-three" model. But lasting structural reform will not be secured with good intentions alone. Continued diligent work by college and university presidents will be required.

Certification. The Commission wants to note its support for the NCAA's efforts to develop a certification program and its concern that current plans appear to be overly complex. The January convention received a report on the progress of the NCAA Council's Subcommittee on Certification. The subcommittee plans to issue a final report, including its recommendations, later this year — on the assumption that legislation relating to certification will be considered at the 1993 NCAA convention.

A pilot certification program is already completed or under way in 36 NCAA member institutions. In discussing the certification program with NCAA representatives, the Knight Commission noted the massive amount of paperwork involved with the pilot effort. The Commission holds strongly to the view that certification should not be a laborious review of institutional compliance with the regulations detailed in the 479-page *NCAA Manual*. The "one-plus-three" model offers a ready structure for certification. In the Commission's view, the objective should be a relatively simple process to validate, institution by institution, presidential control directed toward academic and financial integrity of the athletics program. In the area of academics, for example, NCAA Executive Director Richard Schultz has succinctly defined the key

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issue: In admissions, academic progress and graduation rates, the profile of student-athletes should match the profile of other full-time undergraduates.

POTENTIAL DETOURS

Among the difficulties in the journey ahead lie several detours. These must be avoided. The first detour is the temptation to "fine tune" out of existence the reforms enacted in the last several years. Each element of the world of intercollegiate athletics can put forward a "favorite son" for special consideration — an additional graduate assistant here, an extra grant-in-aid there, a waiver of eligibility requirements elsewhere. Individually, these exceptions may have merit. Collectively they overwhelm reform.

The second lies in legislative efforts at the federal level to impose reform from on high. While these efforts maintain pressure for internal reform, they threaten more harm than good. One proposal, for example, would impose a federally mandated administrative structure on the NCAA.

The NCAA is a private, voluntary association. Only the political appeal of intercollegiate athletics makes this voluntary association vulnerable to such a threat. We believe this legislation promises bad law. More than that, it creates poor precedent for dealing with the private sector, profit or non-profit.[1]

The third detour leads directly to the courtroom. Four states already have enacted legislation to lay aside existing NCAA enforcement rules; comparable legislation is pending in six others. Their immediate effect, within each of the various states, is to virtually forbid the NCAA from enforcing any of its rules without court action. Left unchallenged, these measures threaten to kill nationwide collegiate competition.

Although these statutes appear to involve narrow issues of compliance or legislative support for local institutions, they go right to the heart of what athletic competition — Little League, intercollegiate, or professional — is all about. As a former president of Yale University, the late A. Bartlett Giamatti, once pointed out, sports are bound by rules for a very good reason. They try to assure that the outcomes of contests are fair, that they depend on the relative skills of the contestants and their coaches. If fairness cannot be demonstrated, there is no point in competing because the results have no meaning.

In this regard, a fundamental obligation of sports administration is maintaining oversight of the rules, changing them as participants agree, and enforcing compliance

1. Congressman McMillen offers the following opinion: I cannot agree that the federal government does not have a positive role to play in the reform process. The 1984 Supreme Court ruling that allowed universities to negotiate for broadcast rights exacerbated the chase for money in college sports. Until that ruling is overturned by Congress, and college presidents have the tools they need to redistribute the wealth more evenly, the pattern of abuse will continue. As the 1992 Harris survey demonstrates, a sizable percentage of Americans believe that federal legislation is necessary to control college sports.

in the event of violation. If national governing bodies for intercollegiate athletics cannot ensure fair play through common compliance procedures across 50 states and the District of Columbia, nationwide intercollegiate competition as we have known it will not survive.

The final detour is the danger of despair. Given the complexity of these issues, their detail and public volatility, presidents could easily throw up their hands fearing the effort might be endless and ultimately futile. Presidents must stay the course, and governing boards must give them the authority to act. Presidents cannot lead without the boards' support.

Too much has already been gained to falter now. The battle for reform cannot be won if it is waged in fits and starts. We urge our colleagues in the world of intercollegiate athletics to persevere. The short-term reward will be athletics programs free of academic abuse, financial irregularities, and the suspicion that "the program" defies academic control. But the long-term benefits will belong to student-athletes, and rightfully so, because their welfare is what college sport is all about.

Equally important, we ask our friends in the world of public policy and legislation to stand aside while college and university leaders complete the job. Academic and athletics administrators are demonstrating they can meet the challenge. Attempted legislative remedies, even when well intentioned, can only complicate their task by erecting roadblocks on the road to reform.

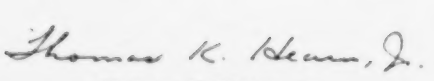
College sports are far different today than they were a year ago, so this is no time for detours through the courtroom, the state capital, or the halls of Congress. The new model, the Presidents Commission, and the NCAA leadership offer college and university administrators a map to get from where we have been to where we want to be — a system of intercollegiate athletics firmly joined to the traditions and values of higher education.

Creed C. Black
President, Knight Foundation

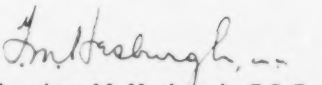
Douglas S. Dibbert
General Alumni Association, University of North Carolina

John A. DiBiaggio
President, Michigan State University

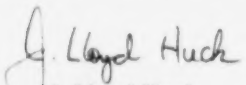
William C. Friday
President Emeritus, University of North Carolina



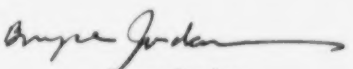
Thomas K. Hearn, Jr.
President, Wake Forest University



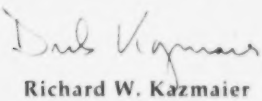
Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C.
President Emeritus, University of Notre Dame



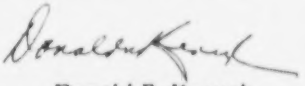
J. Lloyd Huck
Board of Trustees, Pennsylvania State University



Bryce Jordan
President Emeritus, Pennsylvania State University



Richard W. Kazmaier
President, Kazmaier Associates



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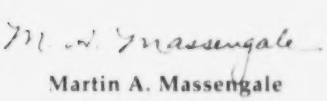

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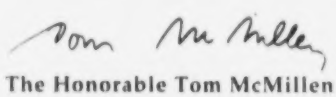
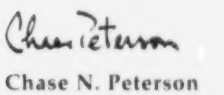
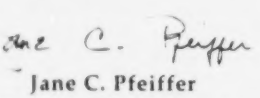


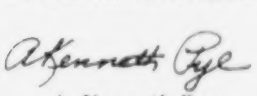
The Honorable Tom McMillen
House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.



Chase N. Peterson
President Emeritus, University of Utah



Jane C. Pfeiffer
Former Chair, National Broadcasting Company



A. Kenneth Pye
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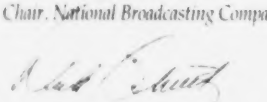
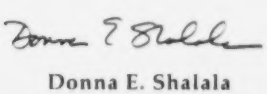


Richard D. Schultz
Executive Director, National Collegiate Athletic Association



Donna E. Shalala
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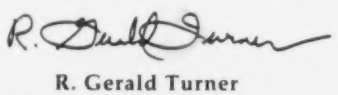
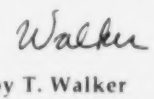
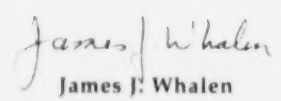


R. Gerald Turner
Chancellor, University of Mississippi



LeRoy T. Walker
Treasurer, United States Olympic Committee



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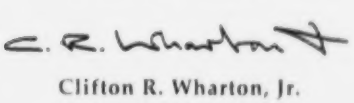
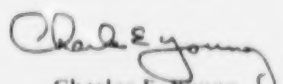


Clifton R. Wharton, Jr.
Chairman & CEO, TIAA-CREF



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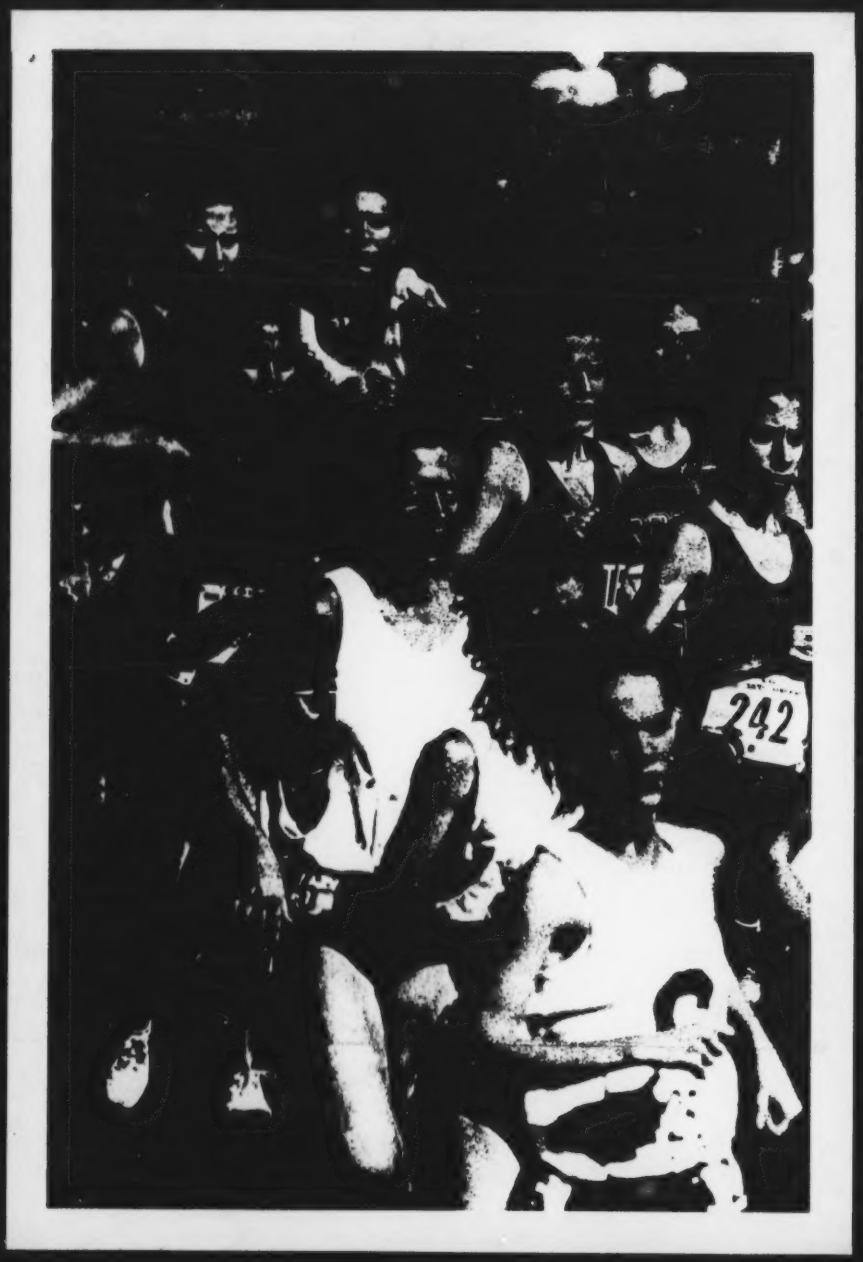

Statement of Principles

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Statement of Principles

Preamble: This institution is committed to a philosophy of firm institutional control of athletics, to the unquestioned academic and financial integrity of our athletics program, and to the accountability of the athletics department to the values and goals befitting higher education. In support of that commitment, the board, officers, faculty and staff of this institution have examined and agreed to the following general principles as a guide to our participation in intercollegiate athletics:

I. The educational values, practices and mission of this institution determine the standards by which we conduct our intercollegiate athletics program.

II. The responsibility and authority for the administration of the athletics department, including all basic policies, personnel and finances, are vested in the president.

III. The welfare, health and safety of student-athletes are primary concerns of athletics administration on this campus. This institution will provide student-athletes with the opportunity for academic experiences as close as possible to the experiences of their classmates.

IV. Every student-athlete — male and female, majority and minority, in all sports — will receive equitable and fair treatment.

V. The admission of student-athletes — including junior college transfers — will be based on their showing reasonable promise of being successful in a course of study leading to an academic degree. That judgment will be made by admissions officials.

VI. Continuing eligibility to participate in intercollegiate athletics will be based on students being able to demonstrate each academic term that they will graduate within five years of their enrolling. Students who do not pass this test will not play.

VII. Student-athletes, in each sport, will be graduated in at least the same proportion as non-athletes who have spent comparable time as full-time students.

VIII. All funds raised and spent in connection with intercollegiate athletics programs will be channeled through the institution's general treasury, not through independent groups, whether internal or external. The athletics department budget will be developed and monitored in accordance with general budgeting procedures on campus.

IX. All athletics-related income from non-university sources for coaches and athletics administrators will be reviewed and approved by the university. In cases where the income involves the university's functions, facilities or name, contracts will be negotiated with the institution.

X. Annual academic and fiscal audits of the athletics program will be conducted. Moreover, this institution intends to seek NCAA certification that its athletics program complies with the principles herein. This institution will promptly correct any deficiencies and will conduct its athletics program in a manner worthy of this distinction.

Acknowledgements

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A Solid Start
OR THE KNIGHT COMMISSION'S ORIGINAL REPORT,
Keeping Faith with the Student-Athlete

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